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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 000322

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SUBJECT: C/T JUDGE ON FRANCE, RWANDA, PAKISTAN, AND HIS
POLITICAL FUTURE

REF: PARIS 186

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR JOSIAH ROSENBLATT FOR REASO
NS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: France,s chief counterterrorism judge, Jean-Louis Bruguiere, told us on January 19 that a recent surge in overall GSPC activities worried French counterterrorism officials, who are convinced there is now a significantly higher threat against France and its interests abroad. Tunisian security services, he said, had essentially shut the French out, preferring to deny the existence of a threat. Morocco was cooperative, while Algeria remained hot and cold, or "as usual."

¶2. (S) Summary continued: Operational relations between France and the U.S. were excellent, Bruguiere said. He also praised DNI John Negroponte,s comments on Pakistan, adding that President Musharraf did not exercise control over all of Pakistan and that this country posed the most immediate threat to global security. He confirmed that he had conferred with GoF officials, including President Chirac, on the timing and fallout of his issuance of arrest warrants against top Kigame aides and warned against better U.S. relations with Rwanda. Bruguiere also confirmed rumors that he will likely be leaving the top terrorism court to pursue political ambitions. END SUMMARY

GSPC THREAT AND THE MAGHREB

¶3. (S) France,s chief counterterrorism judge, Jean-Louis Bruguiere, told us on January 19 that he found an apparent escalation in GSPC activities in the Maghreb during the past several months particularly worrisome. France, he said, was at a higher state of alert and would likely remain so for the foreseeable future. While there was no specific threat information, he said the GoF was convinced that cells and supporters were prepared to be active in France and Europe. The dismantling of at least two, relatively major, Islamic cells on French territory every year showed a clear and present threat. Information exchange with Tunisia, he said, was now virtually non-existent. The Tunisian government was either in denial or did not know how to proceed and was shutting out the French. Morocco continues to be relatively reliable with information, with Algeria as, "as usual," excellent on some days and like Tunisia on others. (COMMENT: Bruguiere,s characterization of operational cooperation with

the Maghreb is worse than other C/T contacts have previously reported. Bruguieres observations, therefore, may or may not apply to all of the French intelligence services. End Comment)

U.S./FRANCE COOPERATION

14. (S) Bruguieres commented that U.S./France judicial and operational exchanges remained excellent. He said that while France,s legal system gave him much more discretion than the U.S. system, our ability to work together was not hindered by this; we had to be creative. (Note: Bruguieres was an expert witness in the successful prosecution of Ahmed Ressam in the famed L.A. trial, the U.S. vs. Ahmed Ressam).

PAKISTAN

15. (S) The judge praised DNI John Negroponte,s comments on Pakistan during a recent Congressional intelligence briefing. He said he was convinced that Pakistan posed the single greatest threat to global security. President Musharaf, he noted, lacked real control over both the territory of the country and security and military agencies. Rogue elements from Pakistan, he insisted, were the most likely to provide nuclear weapons and safe-haven to terrorists.

RWANDA

16. (S) Bruguieres confirmed that he had consulted within the GoF on his issuance of arrest warrants in the cases brought

PARIS 00000322 002 OF 002

against nine of President Kagame,s top aides for assassination of President Habyarimana and three French aircraft crew (see reftel A). He said he presented his decision to French officials, including President Chirac, as his independent judicial right, but chose to consult with them because he was convinced of the need to coordinate timing with the government. Bruguieres said he was not surprised by Rwanda,s official reaction, and said that the GoF had prepared for what it thought would be a violent response against French nationals. He praised his own decision to move forward, adding that the international community had a certain moral responsibility, and that his actions were in the pursuit of justice. Bruguieres was satisfied that the nine individuals he listed could not leave Rwanda without fear of arrest, but was doubtful the ICTR would take up the case. (COMMENT: Bruguieres,s presented his case in a very professional manner, but he did not hide his personal desire to see Kagame,s government isolated. He warned that closer U.S. ties with Rwanda would be a mistake. END COMMENT)

BRUGUIERE MOVING ON?

17. (C) Since 1982 Bruguieres has been one of the leading players in the French fight against terrorism, and he is considered a leading world expert in terrorism. He has been the chief of the French counterterrorism court, created in 1986, since its inception. He has survived at least one direct assassination attempt, and is the most visible counterterrorism figure in France. Bruguieres,s ambitions have now turned to the political, however. He told us that he is likely to run for a parliamentary seat later this year. Bruguieres also casually mentioned that a cabinet post (Minister of Justice) would be his first choice. His departure will be a loss to the court, but it has become a solid institution under his tutelage and it,s clear that Bruguieres intends to stay an active part of the C/T community.

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